

3/3/1
G²
AN
ESSAY
UPON THE
CHARACTER

Of His GRACE the
Duke of Marlborough,
In a LETTER to a
GENTLEMAN in Portugal.

*Magno illi Alexandro, sed sobrio, nec
iracundo simillimus. Patereul.*

LONDON,

Printed for R. KNAPLOCK, at the Bishop's Head.
in St. Paul's Church-Yard, MDCC VII.

CHARACTER

[The page contains faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]

PREFACE.

THE following Essay, as will appear to the Reader, was writ at the Solicitation, and for the Entertainment of a Friend, immediately after the taking of Ostend by the Confederate Army, under the Supreme Command of His Grace the Duke of Marlborough, and has lain by me ever since, and undergone some Corrections, (tho' I am sensible, it is still infinitely short of the Accuracy that accompanies Masterly Writings) and I am now induc'd to Publish it, not by any fond Desire of being an Author (which is one of the last things a Young Man should be fond of) but an Ambition of paying a small Tribute of Praise to the Merits of one of the greatest Men that our

PREFACE.

own, or any other Country has produc'd,
and also a Hope, that others may be
excited thereby to employ their better
Abilities upon so fine a Subject, the No-
bleness and Dignity of which, might
make any Pen perhaps, but my own,
Eloquent.

The following Letter, was sent to the Reader, and for the Enter-
tainment of a Friend, immediately af-
ter the taking of Offend by the Com-
mand of His Grace the Duke of
T. The Reader is desired at the 12th Line of the 9th Page;
after whom we, to read, may.
(The I can possibly, it is still infinitely short
of the Accuracy that accompanies Mr.
Holly Writing) and I am now under a
to publish it, by my own hand, before
of being an Author (which is one of
the last things a Town Man should be
fond of) but an Ambition of being
of Trials to the World
of one of the greatest Authors that our
age has seen.

S I R,

P R I N T E D

contribute on my Part all I can to the
~~Preservation of a Correspondence which~~
~~brings me to much Honour and Plea~~
sure and Advantage. I sent you in
my last all the Private News I could
get, and with this you receive inclos'd

S I R,
I Had the Honour of Yours; and am
glad to hear you have settled your
Affairs in *Portugal*, so much to
your Satisfaction. I very often wish
myself with you at your *Quinta*, for
the sake of Two Things, with which I
am exceedingly delighted, and which
England cannot furnish me with: The
One, the Sweetness of the *Orange* and
Limon Walks there; the other, What is
more agreeable and pleasurable than
those Perfum'd Walks, your own Con-
versation. As to the latter, tho' For-
tune will not permit me to enjoy it, yet
'tis very much in your Power to make
me, if you please, some kind of Com-
pensation for the Loss of it, by pre-
vailing with your self to favour your
Humble Servant with your Letters,
more frequently than you do. I shall

B

con-

(6)

contribute on my Part all I can to the Preservation of a Correspondence which brings me so much Honour and Pleasure, and Advantage. I sent you in my last all the Private News I could get; and with this you receive inclos'd the Publick News-Papers, which will acquaint you with the taking of Offend: News, I am sensible, very acceptable to you, who love your Country so well, and esteem the Duke of Marlborough so much. I likewise send you, in Obedience to your Commands, an Essay upon the Character of that Great Man, which having been undertaken wholly for your Entertainment, if it attain that end, I shall think the Time I have bestow'd upon the Performance, well employ'd.

As to the Letter
I have not been able to enjoy it yet
it is very much in your Power to make
me if you please, some kind of Com-
munion for the Loss of it, by dis-
missing with your self so favour your
Humble Servant with your Letters,
more frequently than you do. I shall
con-

ESSAY
UPON THE
CHARACTER of His Grace
The Duke of Marlborough.

Of all those Happy Persons who have been favour'd by Princes, undoubtedly none ever exceeded in Merit His Grace the *Duke of Marlborough*; and very few I believe have equal'd him. If we look back into History, we shall find many of 'em to have been not so much the Ministers of State, as of the Pleasures of the Prince; and whose Merit and Dexterity consisted, not in the Discharge of any

B 2 useful

useful Office, but the skilful and elegant Preparation of a Banquet perhaps; or a Ball, or the framing Artful Flattery for his Ears, or the bringing unjustifiable Enjoyments to his Bed; or it may be, in accompanying him in his Midnight-Watches, not in the Tent, not at the Council-Table, but at the Table of Intemperance, and Wine, and Riot. Others have meanly flatter'd, and serv'd the Ambition, and the Tyranny of the Monarch. Others have had no other View than to raise unweildy Fortunes to themselves by corrupt Arts; and, provided they could make their own Families great, have been contented to render both the Prince and the People little; under whose Administration you might behold their own Houses magnificently Erected, and splendidly Furnish'd, with all the costly Pieces of Ornament and Elegance, Pomp and Luxury, and themselves revelling under Roofs, gilded with the Gold of the Publick. But if you look'd abroad into the Kingdom, you would be presented with a different

different Prospect; betray'd Counsels,
 an exhausted Treasury, a decay'd Trade,
 a neglected Navy, an unpaid Army,
 Grievances, and Discontents, Poverty,
 and Misery thro' the Nation. Others
 there have been, that have adorn'd the
 Palace of their Sovereign, with the
 Gracefulness of their Person, and the
 Lustre of their Dress, the Smoothness
 of their Behaviour, and the Magnifi-
 cence and Pomp of their Equipage and
 Train; whom we call fine Pieces of
 Furniture for a Court, and may not
 unfitly compare to the curious and
 splendid Figures of Men in the *Arras*
 there, that make a gay Appearance in-
 deed, and beautifie the Rooms, but are
 of no farther Use and Benefit at all:
 For what Service can such Persons ren-
 der their Prince, either in the Fleet, or
 in the Army, or in an Embassy; or in-
 deed any other Employment that re-
 quires Bravery, or Industry, or Capac-
 ity in the Discharge of it? Others have
 possess'd great Accomplishments of
 Mind as well as Body, joining to the
 Grace-

Gracefulness of their Persons, and the Politeness of their Behaviour, solid Wisdom, and delicate Penetration into Affairs of State: In a Word, qualified they were in an extraordinary Degree, for the Court, and the Cabinet of their Master; but unfurnish'd with the Arts and Abilities that fit Men for a Camp. Others have been adorn'd with the Qualifications of the General, without those of the States-man, or the Courtier, great, and renown'd in War, but useless and neglected in Peace. But few shall we find, in whom these several Qualities and Excellencies have been united, without any mixture of base, and corrupt, and unmanly Arts to blemish 'em, as they eminently are in the Person of his Grace the *Duke of Marlborough*, who is Great and Admirable, which way soever we take a Prospect of him, whether as a Souldier, or as a Courtier, or as a States-man.

If we consider him as a Souldier, we shall find him Master, in the highest measure, of all the Qualifications that form

form a Consummate General; I shall mention at present but three principal Ones, *Courage, Conduct, Vigilance.* As to his *Courage*, no Words can be equal to it; no Expressions can be put together fine enough to do it Justice: A *Courage* not inferior to that of the bravest Captains of Ancient and Modern Times: A *Courage*, that has accomplish'd Enterprizes so hazardous, and so hardy, as few Generals would have dar'd so much as to attempt. In a word, a *Courage*, that is not more terrible to his Enemies than it is to his Friends, who tremble for Fear at every Battel, lest the Intrepidity of his Heart, and the Ardour of his Soul, should expose too far a Life of so much Consequence to *Europe*. And most undoubtedly we had long since been depriv'd of that important Life, and the glorious and happy Fruits of it, did not Providence particularly watch over it, and take more care to preserve it than the Hero does himself. *And*

And this Bravery is accompanied with an equal measure of Conduct, and Knowledge in Military Affairs. With what Art does he Encamp? With what Skill does he form a Siege? With what Order does he dispose his Army in the Day of Battle? What Advantages and Improvements does he make of a Victory? How great is his Foresight in the Management of a Campaign? How fine is his Administration of the whole Course of a War? Each of which several Parts of Martial Science alone, will make a Man Considerable in War, but 'tis a rare Felicity that unites 'em all in one single Person. I might add, as a farther Testimony of his Conduct, the Excellent Condition of our Troops, which are the best Paid, the best Cloath'd, the best Arm'd, the best Instructed and Appointed, and animated for Fight in the whole World; and at the same time the most orderly and obedient. No thing can be more regular than our Army in the Towns of our Allies: no Outrages are committed upon the Inhabitants:

habitants: no House is plunder'd: no Street riotously disorder'd: In short, no Soldier draws his Sword but upon the Enemy. And this is owing in a great measure to His Grace's Practice and Example, as well as his Discipline and Conduct; who commands himself as well as his Army, and binds up his own Hands from Rapine and Violence, as well as thole of his Souldiers. And indeed otherwise how can a General contain his Troops within bounds? Can that Commander restrain the Rapine of his Souldiers, who fills his own Tent, and loads his own Waggon, with unwarrantable Spoils?

To so excellent a Conduct, and so singular a Bravery, is join'd a Vigilance no less Extraordinary: For how indefatigable is he in his Application to Martial Affairs? How does he weary his Horse by Day, in the viewing of his Camp, and the ordering of his Troops? How does he busie his Thoughts by Night, in Deliberation and Council? How much Time does he borrow from

his Recreations, from his Meals, from his necessary Repose, to lend it to the War? And this Vigilance produces that wonderful Expedition with which he accomplishes all his Enterprizes. For 'tis not from any extraordinary Swift-ness in the Ship that Transports him, or the Horse that carries him; 'tis not from any strange and uncommon sort of Wheels with which he draws his Cannon; 'tis not from any new and unheard-of kind of Bridges and Boats that he lays over Rivers, that this admirable Expedition proceeds; but 'tis from this singular Vigilance of his; 'tis from indefatigable Industry, flowing from a Contempt of those Vanities and Pleasures which have attended and retarded so many Generals in their Military Undertakings. For no Excess accompanies his Apparel, no Luxury his Meat, no Intemperance his Wine. In fine, no Entertainment, no Pleasure, no Delight can divert him from his intended Enterprize: Hardship and Watching, and Weariness it self can hardly make

make him halt upon a March to rest. Hence it is, that he is in the Trenches of the Enemy very frequently before they hear of his Approach ; takes one Town before the News can arrive to another that he has invested it ; and conquers Countries almost as soon as a Traveller can visit em : For undoubtedly, hardly can one single Man, tho' the most lightly equip'd for a Journey, travel faster, than this great Captain leads a Hundred Thousand, with heavy Cannon and Baggage, and all the Necessaries of an Army. Hardly can one single Man walk round the Walls of a City, observe the Fortifications and view the Buildings, in less time than He invests it, springs Mines, plants Batteries, makes Breaches, and subdues it.

Such wonderful Abilities for War have produced Effects as wonderful, and achiev'd Actions very glorious ; such as have exceeded the Expectation of the present Age, and, if they receive not good Attestation, may perhaps transcend the Belief of the future.

I should write a large History, instead of a short Essay, if I should undertake to speak of all his Illustrious Performances in War. Let it suffice to say, that he has carried the Reputation of the *English* Arms to as high a Pitch as ever it has yet arriv'd at, in the Reigns of our greatest and most successful Monarchs, our *Edwards*, the First and the Third, and the Celebrated *Henry* the Fifth; and has given the *French* a terrible Proof, that the *English* are the Sons of those Brave Men, who put 'em to so shameful and dishonourable a Flight at the renowned Battels of *Cressy*, *Poitiers*, and *Agincourt*. By which immortal Actions, he has not only cast up a Bank of Security about this Island, so that tho' we had no Navy to guard our Coasts, and tho' the Channel were dry, yet it were sufficiently defended and fortified by his Victories; our Fleets at this Day visiting and invading the Enemies Coasts, instead of being necessitated to cover our own; I say, he has not only cast up a Bank of Security

blood I s 3

curity about this Island; but preserv'd
Holland, freed great Part of *Flanders*
 from Slavery and Oppression, sav'd the
 Empire when it was just a sinking; In
 short, gloriously vindicated and prote-
 cted the common Liberties of *Europe*,
 against the most ambitious and formi-
 dable Invader of 'em that these latter
 Ages have produced. Such extraordi-
 nary Services have gain'd him deserved-
 ly, besides uncommon Marks of Affec-
 tion and Esteem from our Allies a-
 broad, the Favour of his Sovereign at
 home, the Thanks of the Parliament,
 and the Applause of the People. And
 most undoubtedly, of all those great
 Persons whom our Princes have distin-
 guish'd by their Favours, our Annals
 cannot furnish us with One, whom the
 Monarch has rais'd and adorn'd with
 so universal an Approbation of the
 Kingdom. Infomuch that Men will
 walk by his Fine House, *Blenheim*,
 when it is finish'd, with Wishes for
 his Prosperity in their Hearts, and his
 Praises in their Mouths, and future
 Gene

Generations will bless the Roof that afforded him so honourable and splendid a Retreat from the Labours of the War, and run with Curiosity to see the Room where the Great General slept, the Apartment where he eat, and the Walks where he meditated.

We have now taken a Survey of this great Man's Martial Abilities, upon which I have been led intently to enlarge more than I intended.

And if we consider him as a Courtier, we shall find him a most accomplish'd One, and fashion'd both by Nature and Art to please. For as he is a consummate Master of all the Decencies of Behaviour, and excellently skill'd in all the Learning that is profess'd in Courts, so he is as it were a Courtier born, being furnish'd with an admirable stock of Natural Civility, Courtesy and Affability, flowing and extending to all Mankind. How extremely condescending is he? How easy of Access? How open is his House, how open his Tent, to all Persons? How free his Discourse?

How

How smooth his Conversation? Nothing he says or does but what is graceful and obliging; He doubles a Favour by the manner of bestowing it; and if at any time he give a Denial, 'tis with more Pain and Discontent to himself, than to the Person who receives it. By these Qualities he is render'd acceptable, as to all that converse with him in general; so to the Souldiery in particular; so that 'tis a matter of difficult Decision, whether he be more the Terror of the Enemy, than the Delight of the Army.

Nor is he less excellent and admirable as a States-man; but adds to the brave Qualities of the Field, and the Polite Accomplishments of the Court, an Extraordinary Knowledge of the World, a delicate Penetration into Affairs, and a fine Sagacity in Council. How large a View has he of *Europe*? So large indeed that he knows what things are transacted, and what Designs are in Agitation almost in all the Courts of it, as perfectly as any one of
us

us can tell what passes in his own House and Family. And how great is his Ability in our Senate-House and at the Council-Table? Of what Weight is his Advice in all the most important and arduous Affairs at home? How much is it regarded and relied upon by our Allies abroad in all their Deliberations? So that in Truth it may be said of him, that while Her Majesty directs the Affairs, and sways all the Scepters of the Confederates by her Wisdom, and Authority, and Power, He, under Her Majesty, moves all their Designs, bears a Part in all their Assemblies, and assists at all their Conferences, not indeed in Person, but by his Capacity, by his Counsel, by his Advice. And here I cannot sufficiently admire the vast Reach and prodigious Strength of this Great Man's Mind, who can comprehend and embrace such a variety of things at once, and sustain such a Weight and Burden of different Affairs; who, amidst the Cares of a Camp and the Government of a mighty Army, amidst

midst Battels and Sieges, can find Leisure and Tranquility of Thought, to apply himself to infinite Negotiations of State, maintain Correspondence, and communicate Counsels, with so many Foreign Princes, and Ministers, and Commonwealths, undertake Embassies, form new Alliances, confirm old Ones; I say, I can hardly conceive it possible for one Man's Mind to be equal to such a Multiplicity and Diversity of Business.

So Excellent, so Extraordinary a Person is his Grace, whether we regard him as a Souldier, or a Courtier, or a States-man.

I should certainly never make an end, if I should enumerate every particular, worthy of Mention, and Celebration in this Incomparable Man. But I must not pass by one, of which no Words can speak too magnificently, and that is, his Neglect of Popular Applause.

For how industriously does he decline the Applauses he has so highly
D merited?

merited? How privately does he enter
London, as he returns from Victory,
 as if he were the vanquish'd, rather
 than the Conqueror; on purpose to
 avoid the Acclamations of the People?
 A rare Instance of Wisdom, and Mo-
 deration, and to Persons that make a
 right Judgment of Matters, such an
 Entry no doubt will appear more glo-
 rious, than the most illustrious of his
 Conquests, than his celebrated Battels
 of *Blenheim* and *Ramelies*. For my
 own Part, I profess, there is no Acti-
 on of his Life, that affects me so much,
 and raises my Admiration so high, or
 that gives me so clear an Image of the
 true Greatness of his Soul. For others,
 many others have got Victories in the
 Field (tho' few of 'em have equall'd
 his Grace's renown'd Achievements)
 but to get a Victory over one's self,
 to vanquish Pride, so predominant a
 Passion in our Humane Nature, to quell
 those Motions of Vanity, and Swellings
 of the Mind, that Success, and Con-
 quest are so apt to raise, and excite

in Men to despise Humane Glory, and Applaud Things which Mankind so passionately pursue, and which are so extremely due to his Signal Services, to shun Acclamations, to run away from Praises, and these too out of the Mouth of the People (“out of which, says a *French* Author, very justly, “proceed “finer, and more agreeable Encomiums, than out of the Mouths of the “Orators or Poets”) this is an Action rare, and more extraordinary than any Military Performance; this is an Action greater, and more magnanimous, in a true Estimate of Things, than to subdue Armies, and put Chains upon the Necks of Nations.

But to conclude his Grace's Character; which indeed I have given you but very imperfectly, after all that has been said, or that can be said in his Praise, the best Commendation, and the finest Panegyric is Time (as *Demosthenes* says of the Actions of the ancient *Athenians*.) I say, Time, which has never yet produc'd a greater Sub-

ject in *England*, in all the Ages that have gone before us, and perhaps never will, in those that shall come after.

A Subject so qualified, and adorn'd, is fit to serve a Mighty Queen, who fills with such eminent Ability, and so much Glory, the *British* Throne, Great in her Armies, Great in her Fleets, Great in her Councils, but Greater still in her own Qualities, and Virtues.

How excellent is her Piety? Witness the Altar, before which she kneels so constantly by Day: Witness the Lamp, by which she watches and prays so late by Night, and which burns not with more Ardour, than her Devotion. And 'tis this Piety of Her Majesty, that shields our Island, like a Guardian Angel, by making God our Confederate, and putting our Arms under his Conduct, and Protection, without which the best concerted Measures, and the most formidable Preparations of War, would break to pieces, and miscarry. For how easily can the bravest, and best disciplin'd Army,

Army, that ever took the Field, be terrified, and overthrown by *the Lord of Hosts*? And how vain, and weak a thing, is the mightiest, and best appointed Navy, that ever Sail'd upon the Ocean, in the Hand of God, that Almighty Hand, that can *take up the Ocean itself in the hollow of it*? 'Tis Her Majesty's Piety then that prevails more against the Common Enemy, than her General by Land, and her Admiral by Sea.

Nor is her Goodness towards her Subjects, less than her Piety towards God. How studious is she of their Welfare and Prosperity? With what Unwillingness does she lead 'em into a War? And how easy does she endeavour to make 'em under it, by applying a considerable share of her own Revenue to the Uses of it? And how frugal is she in her Expences? except where she rewards singular Merit, or relieves the unfortunate, and miserable, and there she is highly bountiful, and munificent; I say, how great is her Frugality? How much does she spare from
her.

her Table, her Apparel, her Train, her Pleasures, that so she may become less burdensome to her People? Like a true *Parent of her Country*, which is a Title, when deserved, very glorious, and which those Princes cannot claim, who throw the Pay of Armies into the Laps of Ladies, or the Coffers of Favourites, and Flatterers, or consume Millions in luxurious Banquets, and Revels, where the expensive Mirth perhaps of one Day, shall make their Subjects sorrowful, and miserable, for many Years.

Nor does she confine her Goodness to her Subjects alone, but extends her Generosity, and Relief to whole Kingdoms, and Nations in Distress, employing her Power in *doing good*, after the Example of the Saviour of the World, not indeed a miraculous Power, as was his, but a Power next to that of working Miracles, I mean, her Victorious Arms, sending Aid, and Assistance to Mankind, as far as her Troops can march, and her Ships can sail, checking the great Disturber of Eu-
rope's

rope's Ambition, and restraining his
 Tyranny, and setting Men free from
 Slavery, and Oppression, and Misery.
 Nay, so great is her Compassion for
 the Calamities of Mankind, that the
 wounds her very Enemies receive pierce
 her own Heart, and she pities, and
 deplores over their Towns, and Cities,
 that her Victories, compell'd by an
 unhappy Necessity, have laid waste,
 wishing out of a Noble Commiseration,
 and a God-like Generosity, that
 she could raise the Buildings out of
 their Ruins, and the dead Inhabitants
 out of their Graves, and so repair by
 her Goodness, what has been destroy'd
 unwillingly by her Power.

In the Reign of a QUEEN so Good,
 and so Gracious, how fortunately are
 Men born? How happily do they
 live? And how contentedly will they
 die, with the Prospect of leaving their
 Country, and their Children, under so
 wise a Rule, so gentle a Government,
 and so provident a Care? —

But

But here, Sir, it is Time to stop,
and bring a short Essay, but a long
Letter to a Conclusion. I am,

S I R,

Your most Obedient,

Humble Servant:

July 13th 1706.

FINIS